

e-Bugle

Garrett Bugle Internet Edition

Volume 55

April 2008

No. 4



Calendar

Thurs., Mar. 20	Garrett Park Casual Music Jam, Town Hall, 8 pm	Mon., Apr. 14	Town Council meeting, Town Hall, 8 pm
Wed., Mar. 26	Citizens Assoc. meeting, Town Hall, 8 pm; White Flint development (see p 5), nominations for Town Council elections	Tues., Apr. 15	Bugle deadline, 4 pm
Sat., Mar. 29	Farmers Market, Penn Place parking lot, 9 am–1 pm	Thurs. Apr. 17	Music Jam, Town Hall, 8 pm
Fri., Apr. 4	Film Society, <i>Crash</i> , Town Hall, 7 pm (see p 5)	Sat., Apr. 19	Tee shirt, bag sale, Penn Place, 9 am (see p 7)
Sat., Apr. 5	Last day to register to vote in May elections, Town Office, 8 am–4 pm; GIVES collection, Penn Place lobby, 9 am–1 pm; large item pick-up	Wed., Apr. 23	Citizens Assoc. meeting, Town Hall, 8 pm; Candidates' Forum
Sun., Apr. 6	Music Jam, Town Hall, 8 pm	Sat., Apr. 26	Garrett Park Elementary Spring Fair, 10 am–3 pm; tee shirt sale (see p 7); Earth Day Plant Swap; Global Warming Fair, Town Hall, 1–5 pm (see p 3)
Tues., Apr. 8	Lunch Bunch, Town Hall, 12:30 pm	Mon., May 5	Town Council Elections
		Mon., May 12	Deadline for registration for Progressive Dinner (see pp 7, 8)
		Sat., June 14	Progressive Dinner (see pp 7, 8)

Four-Fifths of a Council

The March Town Council meeting was another four-member affair, due to Jack Mandel's absence. And boy, is he in trouble next month. More on that in a moment.

The main event of the evening was a variance hearing for a property on Clyde Avenue. The owners wanted to build a smallish deck (10 feet by 12 feet) and applied for a building permit. However, the house already covers every last allowable bit of the lot. That meant no permit. So

the owners requested a variance. Granting that exception, explained Setback Advisory Committee Chair Harry Gordon, would require three things. First, there would need to be an exceptional characteristic of the lot. (In this case, the property is within what is often called the "small lot variance," so no problem there.) But the other two considerations aren't so cut and dried. Applicants, said Harry, must demonstrate unusual practical difficulty or undue hardship if a vari-

(continued next page)

Garrett Park Citizens Association
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(continued from previous page)

ance is not granted, and the Council must be satisfied that granting a variance is not contrary to public interest. Those factors, clearly, are subjective. It's all in the eye of the beholder—sort of like the question, “Do these pants make my butt look big?”

In discussing the variance, there were several questions about whether a patio (which likely would not require a variance) could feasibly be constructed in lieu of a deck.

And then, faster than you can say “undue hardship” three times, another consideration came to the fore. Councilmember Beth Irons brought up a 2006 case from the Maryland Court of Special Appeals, which, she said, had a lot to say about granting variances and applied stringent standards that very, very few circumstances would satisfy. In Beth's reading of the case, “mere convenience did not meet the standard of unreasonable practical difficulties.”

It was clear, however, that, Maryland court or no court, there would be two votes for this variance and two opposed. At that, Councilmember Solange Hansen proposed—and the Council supported, 3-to-1—tabling the matter for a month, so that a vote could be taken in April with Jack Mandel present. And that's why Mr. Tiebreaker is in trouble.

So what else did Jack miss?

Town Administrator Ted Pratt announced that the Garrett Park budget for the 2009 fiscal year will be down by 8 percent.

The zoning ordinance change we've been discussing in this space for the last few months did not come to a vote. Because there have been a few small, technical changes (mostly the word “whereas” inserted in several places), the ordinance will require a new hearing in April and a vote in May.

Finally, whereas she feels there is important work yet to be completed, Mayor Shawaker announced she will be a candidate for another term. Let's just hope we don't have any absentee voters in Florida or Michigan.

Richard Folkers

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Les Henig
PHOTOGRAPHY

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Art at Penn Place

On March 16, the exhibit at Penn Place changed from the watercolors of Madeline Wikler to the collages of Rebecca Hirsh. Wikler, a resident of Silver Spring, presented Maine summer landscapes—scenes of lakes, trees, mountains, farms, and flowers—using a light pastel palette to sensitively portray people and places. The artist, who “enjoys the challenges and surprises that watercolor brings, as well as the freshness and transparency of the medium,” especially enjoys doing informal portraits of young children.

Rebecca Hirsh, whose work will be on display from March 16 until April 20, makes intricate collages and paints using both watercolor and oil. Richard Diebenkorn is one of her favorite artists, and has influenced her work.

Rebecca and Martha Seigel have been friends for many years; they attended American University together. Rebecca lives in Kensington; until her recent retirement she worked as a painting/photograph researcher for a private firm. She worked on the creation of the DC Spy Museum.

Green Again

Rob Pearlman is our benefactor this month for the green banner. He sent along kind words about how much enjoyment the paper has given him and his family over the years. We thank you, Rob.

Donations are complete through December of the 2008/2009 printing year. If anyone else is interested, just send a check made out to the Citizens Association for \$37 to Box 98, Garrett Park, and we will see that you get on the list. Many thanks. Dues can still be sent to Box 456. This money helps fund different Citizens Association activities throughout the year. Thanks in advance for paying up for either of these two requests.

Mary Moyer

Visit Garrett Park's *new* Web site:

www.garrettpark-md.gov

More information next month!

The *Garrett Bugle* is a publication of the Citizens Association of Garrett Park, published 10 times a year. Publication of the *Bugle* is supported by member dues. All residents of Garrett Park are members of the Citizens Association. Yearly dues (\$20 per family or \$10 per individual per address) can be sent to Citizens Association, Box 456, Garrett Park, MD 20896.

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Town Administrator Notes

Citizens Association Meeting: Please plan to attend the Citizens Association meeting in the Town Hall on Wednesday, March 26, at 8 pm, when nominations for the May 5 Town Election will be made. The Mayor and two Council seats (Councilmembers Irons and Wegner) are up for election this year. Important election dates are posted in the Post Office lobby and on the town's Web site (www.garrettpark-md.gov).

State Tax Form: This is really important. When filling out your state income tax forms, please remember to write Garrett Park in the box labeled "City, Town or Taxing Area." This ensures our community receives its fair share of the income tax revenues that the state distributes to Maryland counties, cities, and towns.

Voter Registration, May Elections: The *last day* for voter registration for the May 2008 town elections is April 5. If you need a registration form, please pick one up at the Town Office during normal office hours (8 am–4 pm), the Montgomery County Board of Elections, or the Post Office. Noncitizen residents of Garrett Park not already on the town's voters list who wish to vote in the May election must also register by April 5 at the Town Office. The Town Office will be open from 8 am to noon on Saturday, March 29 and April 5, for those who are unable to come in during the week. Absentee ballots may be applied for at any time through April 25 and must be received by the Town Office before the polls close at 7:30 pm on Town Election Day.

Fiscal Year 2009 Budget: Copies of the proposed fiscal year 2009 budget are available in the Post Office. If those run out, please come by the Town Office for a copy.

Yard Waste Collection: That annual harbinger of spring, weekly yard waste collection, has returned, as it does every March. Yard waste is now collected every Monday through the end of October.

Large Item Pickup: There will be a large item pickup on Saturday, April 5.

Walk Smart/Drive Safely: As the weather improves, Garrett Park residents often stroll through the parks and streets to enjoy our beautiful surroundings. Walkers, please remember to be mindful of turning vehicles, wear light colors or reflective clothing to be more visible early and late, and everyone please obey traffic signs, signals, and street crossing markings. Drivers, please yield to pedestrians, observe the posted 20 mph speed limit, and—as usual—be courteous.

Permits: If you are planning to do any construction this spring, please remember that a Garrett Park building permit is required whenever

a new structure is to be built, including houses, additions, sheds, garages, decks, porches, and driveways. This is in addition to the required Montgomery County permit. Please call the Town Office for a permit application, copies of the setback ordinance, and any other information.

Ted Pratt, Town Administrator
garrett-park@comcast.net, 301-933-7488

Global Warming Fair

Garrett Park Climate Action Now is planning a Global Warming Fair on Saturday, April 26, at the Town Hall from 1 to 5 pm, to encourage individual actions to combat climate change. There will be lots of activities for children, as well as information for adults on simple changes you can make at home that will both reduce energy use and save money. We are looking for middle school and high school students who would like to earn Student Service Learning hours either by designing informational displays or by working on the day of the event. We are also looking for adult volunteers.

Please call or e-mail Janet Wegner.

Rock Creek Cleanup

On Saturday, April 5, local groups throughout the Potomac River Watershed will be cleaning up trash along our waterways. Rock Creek near Garrett Park is once again an eyesore (in spite of last year's successful cleanup). The creek has large quantities of accumulated plastic bags, soda cans, and junk littering the floodplain. A group will be meeting starting at 9 am to clean up Rock Creek along Beach Drive, and more volunteers are needed.

If you can help, meet at the parking area on Beach Drive approximately 1000 feet south of the intersection with Knowles Avenue. The group will be working from 9 am until 12 noon, under leader Charlie Andrews. For more information contact him at qa@sspa.com.



Bugle Notes . . . Sweet and Sour

- ♪ Sad news to impart: on Saturday, February 2, Delores Morris of Maison Maurice passed away at her home in Virginia. Her husband, Carl, was in Florida at that time. A funeral was held on February 9. Carl will be taking over his wife's clients. You can reach him at 301-942-4411 to schedule your appointment.
 - ♪ The Post Office staff wishes to remind residents that postage rates are due to go up on May 12 by a penny. They suggest that you buy out their supply of Forever Stamps while they still have them.
 - ♪ Have you resisted the urge to turn right on the red light at Kenilworth and Strathmore? It's hard to do when there is no one coming in either direction and you are the only one sitting there, waiting.
 - ♪ Strathmore will present Dinorock in "Dinosaur Jamboree" on Saturday, March 29, at 11 am. Tickets required.
 - ♪ Mike Henley sends word that he had the pleasure of visiting childhood pal and ex-Garrett Parker John Lamb in Iowa recently. John lives on and manages the family farm near Spencer. A highlight of the visit was seeing John's mother Leone, who will turn 100 on June 2.
- Leone is in good health and sharp as can be, and lives in a nice assisted living facility near the farm. John visits daily. They asked Mike to pass on regards to all who remember them. Their mailing address is PO Box 118, Royal, Iowa 51357.
 - ♪ The cherry trees behind us in the Estates are getting ready to bloom. Go down Flanders, Waycross Way, Rokeby, and Orleans when they finally do pop. You won't need to go downtown to the Cherry Blossom Festival from March 29 to April 13. These trees are just as beautiful, and so much closer to home.
 - ♪ The Cub Scouts thank Garrett Parkers for your generosity! Pack 521 collected over 1500 books in the "Scouting for Books" effort on February 9. The Book Project is an all-volunteer outreach program of the World Bank Family Network. The current batch of books is slated to be sent to multiple schools and libraries in Ethiopia. The Cub Scouts will continue collecting from the drop box in the post office. Anyone with a larger amount can call Joanne Schmader to arrange a pickup. For more information about The Book Project, call 202-473-8960, or check the Web site at bookprojectwbfn@worldbank.org.

Letter to the Editor

Wind Power

Quite a few Garrett Parkers are working to make the town more green, not only to grow more trees but also to make Garrett Park more environmentally responsible and to reduce the greenhouse gasses that we generate in our daily lives. To that end, I am urging the town to buy wind-generated electrical power for Town Hall, Penn Place, and our streetlights. I have been working with two suppliers and have determined that the increased cost will be around \$1200 per year or about 6 percent. The Council has discussed this, and I believe we are ready to make the switch. If we work with Pepco, they will publicize that Garrett Park has made this commitment and will provide us with plaques that we

can hang in Penn Place where patrons of the Post Office and restaurant will see them. I hope that these plaques, stating that the town has made this commitment, will inspire other communities as well as individual homeowners here to switch to green energy. To the best of my knowledge, there is not currently another town in Maryland that has taken this step. There is every reason why Garrett Park should become a leader in reducing carbon emissions. I would love to see us reach the point where we can post a sign on Strathmore that says Entering a Wind-Powered Community. With your support, we can make that happen.

Hans Wegner

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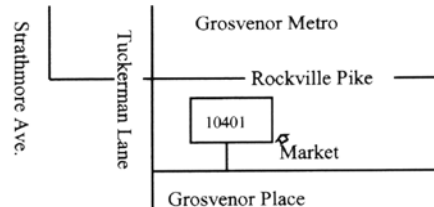
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Citizens Association News

Last Meeting: On February 27, at the Citizens Association meeting in the Town Hall, Jay Hansen, President of the Garrett Park Estates/White Flint Park Citizens Association, joined us to talk about his community's position on the planned re-development of the area across from and above White Flint Mall. The proposed project will have a major effect on many things in and around Garrett Park, including increased traffic, noise, and the possible elimination of the MARC station (a rumor, at this point). Mr. Hansen encouraged the citizens of Garrett Park to become aware of the scope of the plans. Here are a few Web sites one can visit in order to learn about what is going on:

- www.gpe-wfp.org/contactus.htm (the Garrett Park Estates/White Flint Park site)
- www.northbethesdamarket.com
- www.whiteflintplanning.org

After this discussion, we turned our attention to Tim Derstine, the farmer from the farmer's market by Penn Place. He and his wife joined us to talk about Mr. Derstine's recent trips to China. He showed a fascinating slide show and talked about how he and some of his fellow farmers have visited Chinese farms to exchange organic farming ideas and techniques. Many Chinese towns have large greenhouses just outside that grow most of the vegetables for the local people.

Next Meeting: The next Citizens Association meeting is on March 26 at 8 pm. Please join us to discuss the upcoming re-development of the White Flint area (see above), as well as the nominations for the Town Council election that will take place on May 5. Two Council seats and the Mayor's seat are up for reelection. The Citizens Association will hold a Candidates' Forum on April 23 where residents can meet the candidates and ask questions about their platforms.

Dues: If you have not yet paid your 2008 dues, please send a check to P.O. Box 456. The check should be made out to GPCA or the Garrett Park Citizens Association. The fee is \$10 for individuals and \$20 per family.

Garrett Park Listserv: Our neighborhood is made up of people with a wide variety of backgrounds, skills, perspectives, and experiences. Tap into these resources and stay informed with the Garrett Park neighborhood listserv. The listserv is an electronic forum for neighbors to communicate information about town concerns, safety issues, upcoming events, and recommended services (for example, contractors, lawn care, doctors, and baby sitters). The listserv will not be used for unsolicited marketing, and you can unsubscribe at any time. To join, sign in at groups.yahoo.com/group/GarrettParkneighbors/join.

Make a Date for Dinner and a Movie, April 4

On Friday, April 4, the Garrett Park Film Society (GPFS) presents *Crash*, the winner of the Academy Award for Best Picture in 2006. Discussion of the issues raised by this provocative film will follow the showing for those who want to share their reactions.

Crash, set in Los Angeles, examines various aspects of racial conflict through the intersecting stories of a multi-ethnic cast of characters—police, car thieves, a district attorney, a locksmith, a TV director and his wife, and more. Roger Ebert said it was “a movie of intense fascination,” in which all the stories were defined in one way or another by racism, and the characters were both victims of it and guilty of it. The *Rotten Tomatoes* critics called it “that rare cinematic event—a film that challenges audiences to question their own prejudices.” *Rolling Stone* said it was “alive with bracing human drama and blistering wit.” On the other hand, *The Guardian* called the film “a very watchable and well-constructed piece of work,” but concluded “its daringly supercharged fantasies of racial paranoia and humanist redemption are not to be taken too seriously.” So there's lots of potential for disagreement and lively discussion if you

want to stay and talk. The film is rated R and is suitable for mature teens.

Dinner will be served from 7 to 7:30. LA cuisine (if there is such a thing) will be the inspiration for the menu. Cost for dinner is under \$10 (drinks priced separately; beer and wine \$3).

Admission to the film is free for Film Society members and is \$5 per person for nonmembers, \$10/family.



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Letter from the Mayor

In the past month I have been to Annapolis several times for the Maryland Municipal League Legislative Committee meetings and to testify on several bills. One of the bills I testified on would allow homeowners with adjacent undeveloped lots an opportunity to claim the homestead credit on both the lot where the house is located and the undeveloped lot as well. This would benefit over 20 families in town. I have worked with our Delegation and Delegate Al Carr from Kensington to lobby for this bill.

On February 21, Montgomery County municipal leaders met with County Executive Leggett and his top administrative and financial advisors to discuss the budget situation in Montgomery County. We municipal people are seeking to have the municipalities compensated for the services that they provide for their residents. In fact, when we pay our county taxes, we are paying the county for services that it does not provide and that the town provides instead. The county pays back part of the double payment, but the municipalities are seeking to get a fair amount for all the services provided for our residents. In Garrett Park, for example, we do refuse collection, recycling, yard waste removal, trees, leaves, snow removal, parks, and streetscape beautification, to name a few things. On March 20, the Montgomery Chapter of the Maryland Municipal League will have a dinner meeting with the County Council (more on this later).

The Examiner Newspaper: Quite a few people have expressed their frustration with the *Examiner* newspaper, when they have unsuccessfully tried to stop its delivery. I have spoken to the manager of distribution about these concerns. He tells me that their telephone system to end delivery is not working well and has asked that we “bundle” the addresses of those wishing to stop delivery and send them to him electronically. I will be in the Post Office lobby on two Saturdays (March 22 and 29) to collect the addresses of those who wish to stop delivery of the *Examiner*. I suggested that the *Examiner* might place a newspaper box along with the other paper boxes near the train stop. I am also working to arrange with the Cub Scouts an Earth Day project that would have the Cub Scouts go through town to collect and recycle all the *Examiners* that are lying about.

Volunteers Needed: Several of our slightly more senior residents tell me that they need just a little bit of help doing things like climbing up and changing light bulbs, hauling large junk pick-up items out to the curb, etc. If you are a strong student in need of volunteer hours, please call me at 301-942-0766 or the Town Office at 301-933-7488. I will be pleased to write a letter or fill out a form so that you will get credit for your volunteer hours. If you would like the assistance of the volunteers, call the above numbers.

Many people have asked me to run again for mayor. There are some very important things that

still need to be done, so I have agreed to do so. I thank you for all the support that you have given me in the past and hope that you continue to give me your support.

Carolyn Shawaker

The Future of Travel?

It's that time of year when many of us are planning our summer vacations (which often make us appreciate Garrett Park even more when we return)! Your travels can still be green, whether you want to expand your horizons, see other cultures, or mostly get some R&R. More destinations are offering a chance to travel responsibly—"ecotourism." Considering the following will help you travel sustainably.

Go local—we are fortunate that this area has literally thousands of destinations within a few hours, whether you want a spa vacation, a trip to the beach (wear sunscreen!), or hiking in the mountains (using eco-friendly bug repellent, of course). Think about using public transportation; last year, our family took the train to upstate New York, and now the kids prefer it to any other mode of travel!

If you range farther afield, necessitating a carbon-swallowing plane ticket, consider working the purchase of carbon offsets into your vacation budget. And when you arrive, walk or ride a bike if possible. Many destinations are now jumping on the eco-bandwagon, hoping to attract environmentally conscious consumers. When you make a reservation, ask how the hotel is conserving its resources (water use, green gardening). If you're traveling internationally, does the resort employ the local community and respect the local culture?

Bringing home memories of your trip? Go to local crafts markets and try to buy from individual artisans (nothing made from endangered species, obviously). And please let your Garrett Park Climate Action Now (CAN) Committee know if you've found someplace special!

Lisa Kaeser

GPES

Do you have a child who you think is ready for kindergarten? Will that child be 5 years old by September 1, 2008? If so, call the school (301-929-2170) to start the registration process and to make an appointment for Kindergarten Orientation on April 17 and 18. If you have any questions about qualifications, ask when you call.

The Spring Fair will be coming up sooner than usual this year. It is slated for April 26 at the school. A fun day for children of all ages! See you there.

Mary Moyer

Garrett Park Women's Club

All adult women of Garrett Park are members of the Women's Club. Members meet the second Thursday of every month, typically at a member's home, from 7:30 until 9 pm. Each meeting, club members share some tasty snacks, tea, or wine, spending some time catching up on news about members and neighbors and town activities. At each meeting, members usually discuss budget status, fund raising opportunities, and updates on upcoming Women's Club events. New members are always welcome—it's a great way to get to know your neighbors and get connected with other women in town. Some interesting aspect of town history or amusing local lore is always brought up.

Recently, the Women's Club has undertaken several new projects as fund-raising activities. The club has produced a new town tee shirt, featuring a drawing of a stately tree by Donal McLaughlin, local artist and our oldest town resident. The shirt is forest green in color with the tree etched in white with "Town of Garrett Park" printed across the bottom. Shirts will be sold for \$10 at many upcoming town activities. Sales are ongoing; contact Laura Bonetta if you'd like to help sell them, but they also can be purchased twice in April—first at Penn Place/Post Office on April 19 at 9 am, and again on April 26 at the upcoming Earth Day Plant Swap event.

Garrett Park Women's Club is also partnering with Garrett Park Climate Action Now to produce for sale reusable bags for grocery or market shopping. The bags are durable, roomy, and washable. They are forest green with a happy caricature of our town mascot—the porcupine—shown carry-

ing his own bag with a replica of himself! Bags also will be sold at the Garrett Park Earth Day Plant Swap Event, April 26.

Of particular interest is the annual Women's Club sponsored Progressive Dinner. Plans are already underway for this ever popular, "must do," annual event. This year, the dinner is slated for Saturday, June 14. Festivities will begin at 5 pm at the Town Hall, where appetizers will be served and participants give small group assignments for salad and dinner courses to follow. At evening's end, progressive dinner participants will wind their way back to Town Hall for a scrumptious dessert and coffee course. On this delightful evening, town residents open their homes to other town residents (as assigned). It's a wonderful way to spend an evening with old friends, make new ones, welcome new town residents, and enjoy some of our town's finest culinary offerings. Cost of participation is \$10 per person. Registration deadline is May 12 so that final preparations can be made. A form is provided on p 8 and also can be found at the Post Office. Make sure to mark your calendars! Singles—don't be shy about signing up. And couples—please plan to invite a single or older town resident to come along with you. If you have questions, please call Kay Austin (evenings, 301-949-6766) or Celia Hayes (evenings, 301-933-4624), Women's Club co-presidents.

Please look for more news on other upcoming Women's Club events, including the "Over 80's" celebration this June and the annual Attic in the Street sale on Saturday, October 11.

Kay Austin

2008 Garrett Park Women’s Club Progressive Dinner

All adult residents are invited to participate in the Garrett Park Women’s Club Progressive Dinner on Saturday, June 14. We will meet at the Town Hall at 5 pm for appetizers and small group assignments for the successive meal courses (salad and main courses). After dinner, all will return to Town Hall at 8:45 pm for dessert. Participants will be assigned as couples, singles, or even triplets (please invite an unattached neighbor to go along with you!). Participants can serve as salad or dinner hosts (offering your home to assigned guests) or provide food for one of the

other courses. Dinner hosts also may be asked to provide a portion of the dinner course.

We would love for you to consider serving as a host, particularly if you have not done so before. Please volunteer early if you can serve as a *salad* or *dinner* host. Don’t worry if you feel your house is too small; we will accommodate all types and sizes of houses. Include your top three preferences below. Please return your form by Monday, May 12, as event organizers need adequate time to make final arrangements and line up *host house* volunteers.

I/we would like to participate in the 2008 Progressive Dinner on Saturday, June 14.

Names (s):	Address:
Phone:	Contact e-mail:

Choose your top three preferences among these seven options, indicating first, second, and third choices:

Provide appetizer at Town Hall (for 16 to 20 people)	
Host salad at my home	Provide salad (for 12 to 16 people)
Host main course at my house	Provide main course (for 10 to 12 people)
Host vegetarian main (for 10 to 12 people)	Provide dessert, Town Hall (for 16 to 20 people)
Special needs?	

Cost is \$10 per person. Please return form to Garrett Park Progressive Dinner, Box 494, Garrett Park MD, 20896. Make checks payable to Garrett Park Women’s Club.

For questions, contact Kay Austin, austinhk@comcast.net, or Celia Hayes, celiahayes@yahoo.com.

E-mail subject line: GPWC Progressive Dinner

Deadline for registration: Monday, May 12, please!